

# HEALTHY MOVES

## Stretch of the Month

### Pectoral Muscle Stretch

#### Why Stretch the Pecs?

Do you remember being told to sit up or stand up straight? Can you relate to slouching?

Tension in the front shoulder, and chest ( pectoral ) muscles, is largely responsible for the common forward shoulder posture, which accompanies the slouching posture. The following stretches will help you straighten your posture and free up your shoulder function.

#### How to Stretch

- Begin by facing a wall.
- Stretch out your right arm - it should be a little below horizontal.
- Place your right palm against the wall.
- Rotate your trunk slowly to the left - just far enough to to begin to feel a stretch in the front of the right shoulder and/or upper arm.
- Your feet should align parallel to the wall.
- Place your left hand on the wall in front of your chest.
- Keep your right shoulder blade down - i.e. don't let the shoulder shrug upward.
- Repeat with other side.



- Hold each stretch for 20 to 30 seconds.
- Repeat 3 times with each side.

*For both stretches discussed in this article, you should feel only a comfortable stretch in the front of your shoulder and/or in the upper arm. There should be no discomfort in the top or back of shoulder.*

#### Alternate Stretch

- Stand in a doorway.
- Place your elbows and forearms against the the door jamb.
- Your elbows should be at about a 90 degree angle.
- Your upper arms a little below the horizontal position. If there is any discomfort in the shoulders you should lower the arms to a omfortable position.
- Next, take a small step forward, as if to walk through the doorway.
- Gently lean forward aiming to go through the doorway.
- It is important to maintain a straight spine. Tuck your chin. Keep your head over the shoulders and the shoulders over the hips.
- Don't arch your back.
- Repeat stretch with opposite leg stepping forward.

*With either of these stretches you may feel a tingling in your hands and fingers. To assure yourself that this is only temporary drop your arms to the side for one minute. The tingling should subside within one minute or less. If it doesn't you should consult with a health care professional before continuing with this particular stretch.*



*Always work within an easy level of comfort when stretching tense muscles.*

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#### Disclaimer:

Suggestions made in this publication are no substitute for medical advice. If you have any pain or difficulty performing this stretch seek advice from your appropriate health professional.